

# DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY



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The **Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)** is committed to protecting and enhancing Michigan's environment and public health. As leaders in the stewardship of Michigan's environment, the members of this department work on behalf of the people of the Great Lakes state for an improved quality of life and a sustainable future so that future generations can enjoy and utilize the state's resources.

The DEQ was originally created by an executive order issued by then Governor John Engler in 1995, removing environmental functions and programs then administered mostly under the state Department of Natural Resources. Governor Jennifer Granholm recombined the agencies in 2010. Governor Rick Snyder's first executive order (E.O. No. 2011-1) returned the agencies to independent cabinet posts.

The executive order stated that, consistent with Section 3 of Article V of the Michigan Constitution of 1963, the director of the DEQ shall be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the governor, subject to the advice and consent process. The director functions as the department's chief executive officer, monitors program activities to ensure efficiency and effectiveness of department operations, and ensures that the department's mission, policies, and statutory mandates are met. The director's primary authority flows from the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended, and is authorized by Executive Order 1991-31 to delegate decision-making authorities to appropriate levels within the department.

The DEQ is guided by three main principles: (1) To be a leader in environmental stewardship; (2) to be a full partner in Michigan's economic recovery and development; and (3) to excel at customer service.

The **Office of Legislative Affairs** works as the liaison between the Governor's office, legislators, and stakeholder groups on emerging or changing environmental issues. This office focuses on strengthening the DEQ's relationship with the Legislature and ensuring adequate environmental regulations are in place.

The **Office of Policy** oversees policy development, long-term management strategy, and rule promulgation for the DEQ. In addition to supporting legislative efforts, the office represents the DEQ in interagency initiatives and coordinates work on complex regulatory issues.

The **Administration Division** provides a complete range of financial and administrative support services to the DEQ, including budget development, accounting, expenditure and revenue projections and monitoring, procurement, facilities management, real estate, grants, field operations support, and business operations.

The **Air Quality Division** works with business and industrial air emission sources, as well as the general public, to maintain compliance with state and federal air quality statutes in order to minimize adverse impacts on human health and the environment. Staff identify and reduce existing outdoor air pollution problems and prevent significant deterioration of air quality through air emission control programs, air monitoring, control strategy planning, permit issuance, complaint response, and inspection of air emission sources.

The **Office of Drinking Water and Municipal Assistance (ODWMA)** includes the drinking water, source water protection, operator certification and training, environmental health (public swimming pools, campgrounds, septicage, and on-site wastewater), and revolving loan programs. These programs provide regulatory oversight for public water supplies, and support to local health departments. The revolving loan programs provide grant and loan assistance for eligible drinking water, wastewater, and water quality improvement projects.

The **Office of Environmental Assistance (OEA)** implements a number of programs that promote environmental stewardship and enhance customer service related to all programs administered by the DEQ. The primary services provided by the OEA are compliance assistance, pollution prevention, environmental education, permit coordination, financial assistance, incentive programs, training, and outreach. Additionally, the OEA manages metrics, process improvement, and professional development initiatives for the DEQ.

The **Office of the Great Lakes (OGL)** was established in 1985 by the Great Lakes Protection Act as the lead agency within state government to develop policies and programs to protect, enhance, and manage the Great Lakes ecosystem. The OGL focuses on Great Lakes' protection and restoration efforts and reviewing regional requests for diversions of water under the Great Lakes Compact. The OGL implements the state's Coastal Zone Management Program, Areas of Concern Program, and Lakewide Management Plan Program. The director of the OGL also represents the state in a number of binational and interstate organizations, including the Great Lakes Commission and the International Joint Commission's Water Quality Board.

The **Office of Oil, Gas, and Minerals (OOGM)** is responsible for assuring the efficient and orderly development of fossil fuel and mineral resources while protecting the environment, property, and public health and safety. The OOGM oversees the locating, drilling, operating, and plugging of wells used for exploration and production of oil, gas, brine, and other minerals, including wells for underground storage and waste disposal. The OOGM also regulates the development, operation, and reclamation of mines for metallic minerals and dune sand.

The **Office of Waste Management and Radiological Protection (OWMRP)** oversees the solid and hazardous waste programs as well as work related to some radiological materials. Its programs provide regulatory oversight, permit solid and hazardous waste sites, manage scrap tire piles, and regulate transporters of liquid and hazardous waste, as well as medical waste producers. The OWMRP is also responsible for recycling (residential, commercial, and industrial) and finding beneficial uses of waste materials. Activities in the radiological arena include working with nuclear power plants, local emergency responders, and the federal government to assure that Michigan has sufficient resources should there be a release containing radioactive material. The state's radon awareness program is also managed by the OWMRP.

The **Remediation and Redevelopment Division's (RRD)** goal is to create a future where Michigan's contaminated properties are reliably managed and revitalized, thus ensuring the environment is protected. The RRD oversees publicly-funded cleanups and provides technical assistance and financial incentives to private parties and the public to assess, reduce, or eliminate human and environmental risks at contaminated properties throughout Michigan. Facilitating the redevelopment of properties to increase economic vitality; reduce urban sprawl; and provide safe areas for people to live, work, and play are among the RRD's top priorities.

The **Water Resources Division (WRD)** includes land, water management, and pollution control programs addressing the following issues: aquatic nuisance, invasive species, nonpoint source, pretreatment, wastewater discharge (both surface water and groundwater), water management, and water withdrawal. These programs establish water quality standards; issue permits to regulate the discharge of industrial and municipal wastewaters; and monitor state water resources for water quality, the quantity and quality of aquatic habitat, the health of aquatic communities, and compliance with state laws. The WRD also administers programs that help protect sensitive natural resources, including inland lakes and streams, wetlands, floodplains, sand dunes, and the Great Lakes. It is responsible for promoting the best use of these resources for their social and economic benefits and provides technical assistance and regulatory oversight of activities such as dredging or filling of wetlands, streams, and inland lakes; constructing marinas, seawalls, or docks; building in a designated critical sand dune, wetland, or floodplain; and protecting underwater shipwreck resources.

